

Guide for describing challenging living conditions in your applications

Note: The disclosure of these circumstances is voluntary!

Dear applicants,

we kindly welcome you and want to support you on your journey in the certificate program. Some applicants face particularly challenging living conditions that make participation in the program difficult. In this guide, we aim to explain what constitutes the presence of challenging living conditions and how you can declare these. We assure you that all information and statements you provide will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

What can be seen as challenging living condition?

- 1. Health issues/Physical impairment:** Severe or chronic illnesses affecting you can be considered a challenging living condition. If you have a physical impairment, you may need assistive devices to be able to study. If you cannot acquire these due to financial reasons, we might possibly provide them in regard to our funds. For instance, a student with severe visual impairment might require a screen reader.
- 2. Social circumstances:** Special family situations, such as caring for children or relatives in need or overcoming crisis situations (e.g., natural disasters, fleeing conflicts). For example, if you are a single parent you face the issue of the child care.
- 3. Educational barriers:** Special educational obstacles that you have overcome, such as attending poorly equipped schools or accessing education in remote areas.
- 4. Circumstances not yet mentioned:** Perhaps there are additional structural or personal reasons that, despite your abilities and talents, prevent you from enrolling in the certificate program. Please describe these to us. Maybe we can also find a solution to improve these difficult circumstances for you.

How to describe your situation?

- **Be clear:** Describe your situation as objectively and accurately as possible. It's important for us to get a clear picture of your circumstances.
- **Provide evidence:** Attach documents to your application that confirm your situation (medical certificates, official notices, etc.). This is mandatory.
- **Explain the impact:** Describe how the mentioned circumstances specifically affect your ability to start or successfully complete a study program. Explain what assistive tool could enable you to participate in the certificate program.

What help can be offered?

Assistive devices and compensations for disadvantages can only be provided to the extent that financial resources are available. These funds are generated from aid funds and donors who have provided a limited budget. Decisions on what assistance can be granted are made on a case-by-case basis, depending on whether the requested help exceeds the available resources. Students who have been admitted to the certificate program based on their final grades and other criteria can communicate their need for assistance at the beginning of the courses by submitting a written request. Subsequently, they must wait to find out if, and to what extent, they can be awarded assistive devices.

There is no legal entitlement to coverage of costs for assistive devices.

Nevertheless, we try to facilitate assistance within our means, including financial capabilities! Please do make sure to proceed with your request if you find yourself in such a situation!